Policy on Improving Fuel, Wood and Fodder Availability

1126. SHRI AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for formulation of a policy on improving fuel, wood and fodder availability as an important measure to check the destruction of wood;

(b) if so, whether Government have stipulated a policy in this regard; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) to (c) The National Forest Policy, 1988 states the policy of the Government of India on matters relating to forests, including meeting the requirements of fuelwood, fodder, minor produce and small timber. This policy document emphasises the need to meet the requirement of fuelwood, fodder etc. from non-forest lands, specially in areas adjoining forest lands in order to reduce the pressure on forests while, simultaneously, increasing the flow of produce from forest areas within their carrying capacity.

Establishment of Fertilizer Factory on the Bank of Mahanadi

1127. SHRI SANATAN BISI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether clearances have been granted by his Ministry for establishment of a fertilizer factory on the right bank of Mahanadi, very near to the mouth of Paradeep region of Orissa; and

(b) if so, what are the details, thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

पट्टे पर वन भूमि

1128. **श्री महेश्वर सिंह:** क्या पर्यावरण और वन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि भू-संरक्षण अधिनियम के लागू होने के उपरांत राज्य सरकारें मंत्रालय की अनुमति के बिना किसी भी वन भूमि को वनरोपण के अतिरिक्त किसी अन्य प्रयोजन हेतु पट्टे पर नहीं दे सकती है;

(ख) क्या यह भी सच है कि हिमाचल प्रदेश के उद्योग विभाग और हिमाचल प्रदेश सरकार ने हाल ही में भारत सरकार की अनुमति लिए बिना पार्वती वन मंडल में तृतीय श्रेणी की भूमि को कुछ व्यक्तियों को दे दिया है;

(ग) यदि हां, तो उसका ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(घ) क्या सरकार ऐसे पट्टे को रद्द करने के लिए हिमाचल प्रदेश सरकार को निर्देश देगी?

पर्यावरण और वन मंत्री (प्रो॰ सैफुद्दीन सोज़): (क) वन (संरक्षण) अधिनियम, 1980 के उपबंधों के तहत वनेतर प्रयोजनार्थ वन भूमि के उपयोग (डाइवर्जन) के लिए संबंधित राज्य सरकार द्वारा केन्द्रीय सरकार का पूर्व अनुमोदन लेना अपेक्षित है।

(ख) से (घ) सूचना एकत्र की जा रही है और सदन के पटल पर रख दी जाएगी।

Cheaper catalytic converters

1129. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news report appearing in the Business Standard dated 14th July, 1997 under the caption "Cheaper catalytic converters for petrol driven vehicles developed";

(b) if so, the details of the significant break-through achieved by NEERI and implications thereof; and

(c) the details of action plan formulated on the basis of comprehensive review of the policies under implementation for 1997-98 and Ninth Plan to deal with the problem of behicular pollution?

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute, Nagpur, a low-cost, non-noble metal based oxidative catalytic converter for auto-exhaust emission control has been developed. The catalyst has undergone a limited test for conversion efficiency at the Vehicle Research Development Establishment, Ahmadnagar. Detailed trials on durability of the converter have not been carried out.

(c) The Government is implementing a major plan of action for introduction of tighter emission norms for all categories of vehicles, introduction of unleaded petrol and catalytic converter fitted vehicles, and introduction of low-sulphur diesel for cleaner diesel vehicles, in a phased manner. Tighter emission norms for new vehicles were introduced on 1.4.1996, and is to be made stricter with effect from 1.4.2000. The Government is implementing a major programme for introduction of unleaded petrol and catalytic converter fitted vehicles in the country. In the first phase effective from 1.4.1995, unleaded petrol was introduced in the four cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai for new four wheeler petrol vehicles registered in these cities from this date. It is planned to cover about 40 major cities and towns in the next phase, effective from 31.12.1998. Unleaded petrol is to be supplied in the entire country with effect from 1.4.2000. A similar programme for introduction of low-sulphur diesel is under implementation. Low-sulphur diesel (0.5%) has been introduced in the cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai with effect from 1.4.1996. Diesel with 0.25% sulphur is to introduced in the entire country with effect from 1.4.1999.

Problem of villagers living within Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve

1130. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the villagers living within the Nanda Devi Biosphere reserve are agitating for opening its core zone to them;

(b) if so, since when the villagers access to the Biosphere reserve was stopped

(c) whether poachers and hunters now operate without any check in the reserve area; and

(d) if so, the reasons why assistance of villagers is not taken to protect the biosphere as was being done in the past?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) The State Government of Uttar Pradesh has reported that from time to time they have received letters and representations from the local people to open the core zone area for tourism and trekking.

(b) Any entry into the core zone of the Biosphere Reserve has been prohibited since 18.2.1983.

(c) No Sir. The State Government has reported that regular patrolling of the area is done by the staff employed for the purpose who keep a strict watch and control on any poaching and hunting.

(d) Does not arise. However, eco-development activities in the buffer zone are undertaken with the cooperation and involvement of the local people.

Biosphere Reserves

1131. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of potential sites identified as on 31st March, 1997 for